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ABSTRACT

Sacred architecture provides a compelling narrative for explaining the ways religious belief and practice contribute to the construction of self identity and of lived cultural values in all societies. This paper proposes a collaborative and ethnographic research workshop series focused on the intersections among culture, religious meaning and practice, and educational and social change within the framework of sacred architecture at sites ranging from historic churches, temples, shrines, synagogues, and mosques to home altars and memorials, as well as on the more customary vehicle of sacred texts and commentaries. The workshop series would be centered in the arts, but not limited to them, and would draw upon a wide range of fields and academic disciplines including social history, theology, cultural studies, education and urban policy studies, as well as architecture. Another purpose of the workshop series would be to enrich the classroom curricula and teaching methodology from preschool through the university, and to develop policy agendas for social change. The primary target group for the workshops will be graduate students primarily from Teachers College, Columbia University, the host institution for the series, as well as graduate students drawn from Columbia's School of Architecture, Union Theological Seminary and neighboring institutions. The paper outlines the format of the workshops and student evaluation methods and presents 10 proposed workshop topics. It provides historical background on sacred architecture and art and uses Japan as a case study for an international perspective on ways sacred architecture, religion, and education intersect. Contains a 14-item bibliography. (BT)

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SACRED ARCHITECTURE AS A NARRATIVE FOR DEFINING RELIGION, CULTURE AND SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

A Proposal for a Series of Workshops for Educators

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sacred architecture provides a compelling narrative for explaining the ways religious belief and practice contribute to the construction of self-identity and of lived cultural values in all societies. As such, it offers a rich resource for helping individuals better understand themselves and their culture and how a broad range of educational, political and economic institutions interconnect with religious groups to promote social change.

We propose a collaborative and ethnographic research workshop series focused on the intersections among culture, religious meaning and practice, and educational and social change within the framework of sacred architecture **at sites** ranging from historic churches, temples, shrines, synagogues and mosques to home altars and memorials, as well as on the more customary vehicle of sacred texts and commentaries.

Sacred architectural sites provide unique, engaging and powerful research tools for the study of both historical and contemporary spiritual and cultural meaning and practice and its relationship to social and educational change. These sites can be read as narratives to explain how physical space and social values combine to fuel individual and community transformation and identity across a broad spectrum of diverse groups.

From a philosophical perspective, the study of the interrelationships among architecture, religious belief and practice and social change easily lend themselves to being framed within the context of such fundamental and ancient questions as: *What is true? What is ethically good? What is real?* and *What is beautiful*? In order to enhance the breadth and reach of the realms of meaning addressed, every effort will be made to construct the workshop series along the contours of all of these questions.

Architecture, as an art form which aims at the creation of *what is beautiful*, speaks in a special way to the senses, the emotions and intuition. Thus it offers a rich and greatly underutilized medium for generating an enriched understanding of the human identity and of the ways societies are roused into social and political transformation through art.

Intrinsic to all powerful art forms is the creative use of metaphor. As an effective vehicle for presenting convincing metaphors, architecture is close to other arts, in particular, poetry. As John Ruskin wrote in the nineteenth century:

> There are two strong conquerors of the forgetfulness of men, poetry and architecture; and the latter in some sort of way includes the former, and is mightier in reality; it is well to have not only what men have thought and felt, but what their hands have handled, and their strength wrought; and their eyes beheld; all the days of their life.[1]

Harvard professor, Elaine Scarry, argues in *On Beauty and Being Fair* that art is not only a matter of beauty, but also involves responses that are perceptual events of profound significance

related to individual, social and cultural values. Beauty, she says, makes such cultural values as fairness and equality concrete by presenting them directly to the senses. What is experienced in art not only relates to the question: *What is beautiful*?, but also to the questions: *What is good? What is true?* and *What is real*?

With its direct appeal to the senses, "beauty stops us, transfixes us, fills us with a surfeit of awareness," Scarry says. Beauty as experienced in the form of architecture can take an individual away from the center of his or her own preoccupations and prompt a shift of attention toward others and, ultimately, toward greater concern for such important cultural norms as social justice, compassion and fairness.[2]

II. A WORKSHOP SERIES ON SACRED ARCHITECTURE FOR EDUCATORS

The study of sacred sites is a largely overlooked resource for analyzing how belief systems influence and are influenced by the social, political and economic contexts in which they function. There is a paucity of readily available scholarship on the interconnection of religion, architecture and social change and what is available is marginalized from mainstream academic and professional studies.

In order to remedy this problem, we propose the development of a workshop series for educators **to be held at important sacred architectural sites** both in the United States and abroad. The workshop series would be centered in the arts, but is not limited to them, and would draw upon a wide range of fields and academic disciplines including social history, theology, cultural studies, education and urban policy studies, as well as architecture.

The purposes of the workshop series are:

[1] cultivating a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the intersections among architecture, religious meaning and practice, and culture among a diverse range of cultures;

[2] highlighting the ways sacred architecture and religions are shaped by society and in turn play a unique role in the formulation and actualization of societal and educational change in response to local, national and global challenges;

[3] increasing the awareness of the usefulness of these findings for enriching classroom curricula and teaching methodology from preschool through the university, and for developing policy agendas for social change.

Target Population for the Workshops

The primary target group for the workshops will be graduate students primarily from Teachers College, Columbia University, the host institution for the series, as well as graduate students drawn from the School of Architecture at Columbia University, Union Theological Seminary and the neighboring institutions, the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Manhattan School of Music.

Chairs and Heads of Teacher College, Columbia University Departments and Programs whose mission is most closely related to the purposes of the workshop series have been contacted and meetings have been held with them to secure their recommendations on ways the workshop series might be designed to serve their course and program needs and to meet the highest academic standards at Teachers College.

Each expressed enthusiasm for the workshops, offered ideas for the design, content and methodology of the series, and gave pledges of strong support and their willingness to cosponsor the series. In addition, each has indicated an interest in organizing and teaching specific workshops related to their fields and special areas of interest. Among the Teachers College faculty who have offered to cosponsor the workshop series are:

1. Professor Joan Jeffri, Program Coordinator Arts, Administration, and Arts in Education and Director, Research Center for Arts and Culture, Arts and Humanities Department;

2. Professor Emeritus Douglas M. Sloan, Past Director, the Center for the Study of the Spiritual Foundations of Education, Arts and Humanities Department;

3. Professor Stephen J. Thornton, Director, Social Studies and Education Program, Arts and Humanities Department;

4. Professor Hope Leichter, Elbenwood Professor of Education, Department of International and Transcultural Studies

Also, efforts will be made to broaden participation in the workshops to those outside the Columbia University community to include clergy and others in the field of religion, educators, community activists, architects, museum staff and the informed public whose interests converge around sacred architecture, religion and social policy. This will be done by forming collaborative relationships with organizations such as the New York Landmarks Conservancy Sacred Sites Program.

My own relationships over the years with the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, and a wide range of museums in the New York City area, including the Smithsonian's Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum, the American Museum of Natural History and the Museum of the City of New York assure a strong institutional base for building a multidisciplinary and cross professional field initiative. Each of these institutions has expressed interest in

participating in such a collaboration and are enthusiastic about the workshop series' goals of integrating scholarly research, workshops, exhibitions and publication with an ethnographic and action orientation.

Format of the Workshops

The format of each workshop will include lectures and panels presentations given by leading scholars who will be invited to prepare papers and bibliographies of supplementary print and electronic resources for distribution in advance to participants and on-site tours, participation in sacred rituals, and meetings with clergy and other staff and congregants.

Also, each participant will select one out of a number of different seminar and studio groups which will be established on the basis of participant interests. These studio and seminar groups will be the primary vehicles for the participants to identify and develop specific topics for the written assignments and projects they are required to submit within six weeks after the conclusion of the workshop.. Among the groups under consideration are:

[1] an oral and archival history writing group;
[2] a sacred architectural model building group;
[3] a group focused on identifying sacred metaphors and core theological and religious narratives relevant to contemporary issues for possible presentation in written ,visual and exhibition form;
[4] a group on the development of proposals for innovative classroom curricula and teaching methodology;
[5] a group on the development and school and community reform agendas related to the use of sacred sites, religion and social reform;
[6] a group focused on sacred architecture and family life around such events and life cycles as birth, young adulthood, marriage, old age and death.

Evaluation of Graduate Students in the Workshop

Each participant enrolled for academic credit will be required to submit a research paper or a curriculum and teaching plan, or an art project accompanied by written and bibliographic documentation.

The written assignments will be expected to integrate the review and analysis of relevant scholarly print and electronic resources with the workshop experience which places great emphasis on ethnographic field work grounded in participant-observation, interviews, the study of religious institutional archives and other aspects of the material culture, especially those related to sacred architectural and religious practice.

The best of the scholarly presentations and participant written assignments and visual, performance and other art projects submitted will be made available electronically through a special Web site created for the Sacred Architecture workshop series, and will also be published in a variety of print forms.

Proposed Topics for Individual Workshops in the Series

A number of tentative topics for individual workshops in the series have already emerged which draw upon local and emerging demographic trends in New York City, as well as related international trends in Asia, and the historical roots of Western architectural and cultural traditions in Europe and the Middle East.

These topics include:

1. *Sacred Architecture, American Protestantism and Educational and Social Change*

2. *Sacred Architecture in Asian Communities: Uniting Confucius and Christ- "Where the Twain Shall Meet"*

3. *Sacred Architecture in Diaspora: The Muslim Experience in New York City*

4. *Leading African American Architects: Designing Urban Churches for Spiritual and Social Renewal*

5. *Sacred Architecture and Judaism: Ancient and Modern Symbiosis and Change*

6. *American Gothic Sacred Architecture: Its Dynamic Social Relevance and Enduring Presence in the American Landscape*

7. *Mystical Traditions in Architecture: Bridging Inner and Social Transformation in the American Buddhist Movement*

8. *Reading "the Bones" of American Sacred Architecture Through the Lens of the History of Italian Sacred Architecture*

9. *Metaphors for the Human Journey Through the Life Span Embedded in Sacred Architecture and Ritual: Constructing Individual and Family Identity*

10. *The Promise of Studying Sacred Architecture As A Narrative* for *Tikkum O Lam, "Repairing the World"*

III. BACKGROUND DISCUSSION OF SACRED ARCHITECTURE AND ART AS A NARRATIVE FOR RELIGION, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

There is relatively little available scholarship on the impact of religion on social change. As James Q. Wilson has pointed out, "We have been down every other road, but the religion road we haven't explored adequately." John Di Iulio, founder of the Partnership for Research on Religion and At-Risk Youth, also found after extensive research that there are few scholarly studies which

focus on the impact of religious institutions on social change. As he noted, "You can go through thousands of studies and you find that people are not looking at the role faith-based programs play in delivering social services."[3]

Of the those few studies that do exist, most focus on *macro* level questions and issues. They tend to overlook experience on the *micro* level related to social action activities initiated through specific houses of worship and religious communities. This is not to say that within the framework of their research goals these *macro* studies have not made an important contribution to the field.

A example of a recent and an insightful *macro* level study is Kenneth Heinemann's *A Catholic New Deal: Religion and Reform in Depressed Pittsburgh* which describes the role religion played in the history of organized labor in the 1930s. It shows that Roman Catholics, largely new immigrants in Diaspora, were a marginalized working class group in the 1930s, yet managed to play a vital role in labor activism and in framing the evolving definition of social justice in that era. Also, it describes how Catholic immigrants through their religious and ethnic identities and institutional networks helped make the Democratic Party and the CIO powerful agents of social change.[4]

The workshop series for educators proposed here will primarily focus on religion and social change from the perspective of religious belief and values reflected in sacred architecture from a *micro* viewpoint. **These workshops will be undertaken on the ground where people interact in real time and in specific spaces and are moved by belief systems molded into architectural detail that can be seen and touched.** This is not a project about social change alone, or of religion alone for its own sake, or of architecture alone, but a project focused on all three

Sacred Architecture, American Protestantism and Educational and Social Change: An Overview

In many American mainstream Protestant churches, the pulpit is the central architectural feature of the church. In effect, the pulpit announces that preaching *The Word* is a fundamental liturgy and that what is valued is a rational kind of religion dependent on close textual analysis of the Bible regarding the existence of God and proper human behavior.

In contrast, in American Roman Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Christian traditions, the altar is central and the pulpit is usually off to the side and secondary. The primary liturgy is the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice at the altar. These different architectural arrangements reflect very different religious beliefs about the relative importance of preaching *The Word* as compared to the mysterious Eucharist drama of *The Word Made Flesh*. As J. Pitman McGeheeland and Paula J. Webb have observed, the pulpit focuses on the art of oratory, while the altar focuses on the art of drama.[5]

In Nineteenth Century American Protestantism there was an evangelical confidence in the possibilities of creating God's kingdom on earth through strong preaching from the pulpit and the implantation of Protestant principles in government and in society generally. The process of redemption was not thought of as passive or deterministic, but obtainable through personal religious transformation based on the *Word of God* and an activist republican philosophy.

This activist theology, along with the importance given to the teaching role of the clergy and the stress on the necessity of Bible reading for redemption, propelled American Protestantism into playing a major role in the establishment of a system of free, common and public schools for increasingly larger numbers of children from elementary through high school. Historically, many scholars consider this a pivotal historical moment, in so far as the public school system represents a major social revolution in America and the foundation of America's political and economic dominance in the Twentieth Century.

In addition to Protestant theology there was a vast network of Protestant institutions upon which the American public school movement was built in the Nineteenth Century. These institutions, largely in the form of Sunday schools, provided a solid foundation which helped transform American public education from a dream into a reality. As David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot tell us in *Managers of Virtue, Public School Leadership in America, 1820-1980*, there was little difference either in ideology or practice between Sunday schools and the Pan Protestant public elementary schools, often referred to as "Weekday schools".[6].

Across the nation, the evangelical activism of Presbyterians, Congregationalist, Baptists and Methodists, and of such non-evangelical Protestant sects as Unitarians, joined forces to encourage the creation of one room public schools with their steeple bell towers drawn from church architecture which for some still remain nostalgic icons of Nineteenth Century American's social cohesion.

These small school houses with their teachers and their McGuffey readers joined with the churches with their preachers and their Bibles in their mutual roles as incubators of religious, civic and economic virtues for youth. Since then in every generation of school reform in America there have been school critics who return to this earlier blend of religious, educational and architectural philosophy, its fund of metaphors and its overarching purposes and propose it as the best model for reforming American schooling.

Eventually, gigantic, industrial and factory style school buildings replaced the little steeple-topped school houses as the dominating icon on the landscape of American school architecture. More than architecture changed, however. The earlier educational leaders who saw themselves as "an aristocracy of virtue" grounded in the Bible and a republican ideology were replaced by "experts and managers" certified by professional training and filled with business and scientific fervor.[7]

But the past was not erased entirely. The traditional Protestant pieties were merged, at least in rhetoric into the business, scientific and utilitarian pedagogy of the new school "experts." Architecturally, this uneasy union came to be symbolized in the small bell towers which sat so

awkwardly and paradoxically on the top of many of these large factory style school buildings in urban and rural settings alike.

Chinese Christian, Muslim and African Americans Religion and Social Change

In major urban areas across the United States there are numerous kinds of sacred architectural sites and religions belief and practice systems serving diverse social, cultural and racial and gender groups. A few will be mentioned here as examples of the kinds of groups that might be highlighted in the workshop series. Among these groups are Chinese Christian, Muslim and African Americans.

There are more than one thousand Chinese Christian Americans in the United States, most of whom worship in Protestant Evangelical congregations which bring together these Chinese in *Diaspora* from a variety of geographic regions including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Mainland China and other Southeastern countries. In spite of the fact that so many of these churches exist and that in most of them Christianity is the most practiced religion, very little research literature has been undertaken on these Chinese American churches.

A recent and most welcome addition to the literature is Fenggong Yang's *Chinese Christians in American Conversion: Assimilation and Adhesive Identities* which deals with how Chinese construct and reconstruct their identities in their passage as cross cultural sojourners in the United States. The church for Chinese Americans, Yang found, is a place where they can selectively assimilate into American society while simultaneously pursuing Chinese values and culture. Yang also found that despite conflicts and tensions, most of the believers studied were able to integrate their evangelical Christianity with their traditional Chinese Confucian beliefs, a process that involved both symbiosis and change.[8]

Muslim Americans constitute the fastest growing religious group in the United States. The tremendous growth in the number of Muslim Americans in the United States is clearly visible in the presence of upwards of 3,000 *masjids*, community mosques, which have been created in the United States.

Whether large or small, complex or simple, Muslim communities in New York City and elsewhere in the united States are vigorously building more and more spiritual spaces in the public realm in a concerted effort to strengthen Islamic religious belief and practice, community cohesion an social outreach. One of the largest, most conspicuously modern and easily the grandest of these sacred spaces is the Islamic Center of Manhattan designed by Skidmore, Owens and Merrill and completed in 1991 at a cost eight million dollars.

Most Islamic communities, however, house their religious and social activities in much more modest structures. For example, the Jersey City Islamic Center across the Hudson River from New York City holds about 600 people and has a school for 250 students who study Arabic and Islamic culture, in addition to the standard curriculum required by the state of New Jersey. It also offers job training, car services child care and free meals during *Ramadan* in the distressed community where it is located for anyone, regardless of their religion.[9]

Many Islamic communities house their religious services and social activities in even more modest circumstances than the one described in Jersey City. Of the thousands of Muslims who attended religious services for *Ramadan* in New York City in December 1998, for example, the majority observed the holy month in one of approximately 75 storefront spaces.

The modest architectural quality of many Muslim houses of worship is due to a number of factors beyond the limited economic circumstances of most of the new immigrants who worship in them. Another factor can be found in Islamic law itself which requires that the financial arrangements for the purchase and upkeep of houses of worship be limited to what the faithful can manage without paying interest.

Another factor is that under Islamic law there are very few architectural specifications for building sacred sites. Muslims need only be concerned that the *mihrab*, the altar niche, faces Mecca, a directional concept know as *Quhab*. As Stephen Klimet has noted, "Once this requirement is met, the design can be monumental or modest, undoing the perception that every mosque must have arches and vaults."[10]

An interesting perspective on this movement worldwide can be found in the projects funded by the Aga Khan, the *iman* or leader of the Islaili sect of Shia Muslims, which he has supported in an effort to reverse what he believes is the general loss of consciousness and commitment to the importance of sacred architecture's place in the public realm. On the basis of the importance of these projects, Herbert Muschamp, who writes on architecture for *The New York Times*, describes the Aga Kahn as one of the most significant figures in the field of architecture today. [11]

In his commencement address at Brown University in 1996, the Aga Kahn described how, for all Muslims the concepts of *Din* and *Dunya*, *Faith* and the *World*, are linked and how since prehistoric times sacred architecture has been used to create a prominent place for the spiritual in everyday life. He also pointed out because this is less true today than it was in the past, he has dedicated himself to working to assure that the art of architecture will again be employed to unite spirit and matter in a more important way in the landscape of everyday public life.

Primarily, the Aga Kahn has been working to achieve his vision through an Architectural Awards project in which awards are presented every three years to projects, not architects, which in addition to their aesthetic merit take into account social needs, economic growth and the relationship between local traditions and spiritual faith. The Awards program has become an important vehicle for lifting sacred architecture into a more prominent position in our emerging global culture where the architecture of Disney, Microsoft and McDonalds hold commanding positions.

Just as Muslims will go through a complex series of stages in their journey to become Muslim Americans, so too American culture will experience strain in accommodating to the tremendous increase in the number of Islamic architectural sites and of the impact of the growing visibility of Islamic culture in the United States. In particular, the sharply contrasting positions

between Islamic and other major American religions around such issues as gender is likely to raise domestic policy challenges and possibly the need for mediation with other community groups with differing belief systems and agendas. In addition, there is likely to be an impact on US Foreign policy, especially in its relations with Islamic states as well.

African American Churches Dynamic Role in Social Change

In the past African American churches served as command centers for the Civil Rights movement which eventually expanded to gather women, the disabled and gays and lesbians into the momentum it created. More recently, in response to changing demographics and other social pressures, African American churches, with the help of funding from local, state and the federal governments, bank loans, corporate support and individual and philanthropic involvement, are engineering another revolution which is on the way to having as much impact as the earlier civil rights movement had on the American social, political and economic landscape.

A number of African American churches are undertaking broad changes in the scope and the role they play in poor communities in urban America by becoming more directly involved in the delivery of housing, education, economic development, health care, senior citizen services and child care. In the process, these African American churches are radically reconfiguring the ways government agencies and other funding sources relate to churches and community local groups.

These social services are not being built on governmental funding and structures alone. Rather, they are being built on of religious faith, fortified by powerful preaching, strong sacred music programs, rituals for initiation and affirmation of faith such as Baptism and generous tithing situated in sacred architectural sites that often are overflowing with a thousand or more believers.

IV. AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON WAYS SACRED ARCHITECTURE, RELIGION AND EDUCATION INTERSECT: *Japan as a Casestudy*

My own recent research on the religious foundations of Japanese education deals the ways the foundational orthodoxy of Shinto, Buddhist and Confucian traditions are reflected in everyday Japanese educational practice [12]. These traditions are dynamically operative in a firm pattern which integrates religious beliefs and practices with the ancient and the modern, the public and private sectors and the government and the economy.

Using an ecological approach in which religious institutions as well as schools were studied, numerous examples were found in which schooling, religious belief, architecture and social change are linked. One of the most impressive school practices with clear religious roots is *hansei*, the use of critical reflection as a teaching methodology. In this practice, students and teachers engage in individual and classroom critical reflection on moral values such as cooperation, empathy, effort, persistence and group awareness with the aim of improving their sense of responsibility as a group in school, at home and in their communities.

Another example rooted in Japanese religious traditions was found in the pervasive pedagogical principle held by Japanese educators that pain, loneliness, confusion, anxiety, self-sacrifice and disequilibrium can be powerful teaching tools for middle and senior high school adolescents. Many parents and teachers believe that nurturing these states of discomfort is necessary to help adolescents successfully negotiate their transition from indulgent childhood to an adulthood of dedicated commitment to family, work and civic responsibility.

Building on these school practices Shinto shrines have developed numerous religious rituals which function to both encourage and ameliorate the pain generated by family and school expectations for high academic achievement and admission to status universities among students. One of the rituals is based on the Shinto practice of *genze riyaku* in which a small tablet, an *ema*, usually made of cypress wood is used.

Believers write their petitions for such wishes as good health, success and good relationships on these tablets and leave them at the shrine after they engage in the prescribed set of religious rituals. The largest number of *ema* in Japan are related to academic achievement. The text of many of these *ema* contain pleas by students for stoic self-control and forbearance to resist temptations to laziness and for the commitment to devote themselves entirely to their school work and preparation for university exams.

Another practice with overtones of ancient rituals related to the life passage from childhood to adulthood and fashioned into a greatly miniaturized form is *ohya-kudo-mairi*, the "one hundred times homage." This ritual aims to win favor from *kami*, spirits, through self-inflicted pain and suffering. Basically, *ohya-kudo-mairi* requires students to run up steps at the entrance to Shinto shrines, and at the top of the steps, ring a bell, clap their hands and say a prayer and then run back down and up the steps at least one hundred times.

The image of Japanese students running up and down Shinto shrine steps represents a powerful metaphor for Japan's post-World War II success in using spiritual traditions and sacred architecture to socialize large numbers of its youth into actively participating in its national obsession with high academic achievement and global economic supremacy.

Hansei and *ohya-kudo-mairi* demonstrate the ways in which contemporary public schooling and social change interconnects with historical religious belief and sacred architecture in Japan. However, even though these particular traditions have deep traditional roots, they should not be read as signifying that all cultural values and behavior is static. Side by side with their enduring traditions, cultures also are infused with dynamic and radical change. Cultures change continuously as a result of forces from within and from without, sometimes in ways which revitalize them in effective and compassionate ways and at other times in ways which affect them in adverse and destructive ways.

Valuable examples of the dynamic nature of religious belief and sacred architecture as well as of the importance of cross cultural borrowing can be found in the history of Shintoism in Japan. In Seventh and Eight Century Japan there was a major consolidation of the Japanese imperial state based on the Chinese model. As a result, at that time the architectural scale and complexity

of Shinto shrines changed, as did the architectural orientation of these sites to what was considered the most holy place in each shrine.

The Chinese emphasis on the importance of architectural principles of monumentality, order and hierarchy to give more substantial presence to religious structures was imported by the Japanese and even superimposed on one of Shinto's most sacred shrines, *Ise*. In the place of simple straw ropes, pebbles and stakes with linen ribbons at *Ise*, more complex, differentiated compounds were adopted from China to differentiate and signify *Ise's* inner and most sacred sanctuaries.

An even more dramatic turnaround in Shinto architecture took place at this time with the shift of the orientation of Shinto shrines from East to West, from an axis appropriate to the rising and the setting of the sun fundamental to Japan's indigenous, core sacred narrative related to the worship of the Sun Goddess, to a North-South orientation related to Chinese cosmology and sacred practice.

Just as Shinto changed its earlier and simpler sacred architectural forms as a result of internal and external political and economic change, so have other religions, including Christianity. As William H. Coaldrake points out in *Architecture and Authority in Japan*, most religions have their origins among meek and humble people, but as religions expand and institutionalize and come into contact with other cultures they tend to build more massive structures which implicitly negate many of their earlier teachings about humankind, nature and life after death.[13]

In terms of the history of Christianity, the way the square and the rectangle have been used in Christian church design provides another powerful example of the dynamic relationship of cultural change and sacred architecture. The rectangular plan of European Medieval churches and cathedrals mirrored the belief at the time in the remoteness of the Divine by placing the main altar a long distance directly to the east of the main entrance which was located at the western end of the building. In contrast, Renaissance churches in Italy often had square plans which accommodated the emerging Humanistic belief in the centrality of the rational individual and an altered sense of God's distance from mankind.

V. CONCLUSION

In looking at educational and social history through the prism of religious belief and sacred architecture, we gain insight not only into how institutional forms and meaning merged in the past, but how they continue to give people a common identity, a standard for self exploration and the ideas and the structures for taking action in their own lives and in their communities.

In modern America, as Martin E. Marty points out, more people attend houses of worship than sporting events. And as Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehman demonstrate in *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*, religion, political and social action continue to be mixed together in as complex and important ways today as they were in the past. Clearly, neither modernism, nor globalism or the cyber revolution have succeeded in making religion entirely irrelevant.[14]

Over the past four decades revisionist historians have taught us much about how educational institutions, hospitals, corporations and the government have failed to fulfill our historic ideals of freedom, equality and prosperity for all. Their advocacy scholarship has played an important role in the development of more government programs aimed at social betterment for all. But in the process, they all too often have done a great disservice by neglecting the significant role ethnic and religious communities have played in past educational, social and political reform and continue to play today.

Many historians believe that, along with our third major wave of immigration in America, today we are experiencing a Second Great Religious Revival. As evidence they point to the prodigious number of grassroots, religious and community-based programs, especially those organized by many of the newer and more marginalized groups in *Diaspora*. These programs, as was pointed out in the discussion of Chinese, Muslim and African Americans are found all across America whever there are churches, and mosques and other houses of worship which have reached out and have connected to schools, health systems, housing, employment, business enterprises and cultural and arts projects in the public and private sector.

Some of these programs even have expanded their reach outside their local communities and sponsor projects in other countries in conjunction with international organizations involved in addressing such global challenges as world hunger, human rights, the environment and exploitive employment and business practices.

These rapid social, and demographic trends in today's world today provide a strong rationale for the significance and importance of creating workshops for educators which focus on the intersections among culture, religious meaning and practice and educational and social change within the framework of sacred architecture.

Primarily, the study of sacred architecture provides a unique, and powerful research tool for the study of both historical and contemporary spiritual meaning and practice and its relationship to social change. But even more importantly, it offers an unequaled and rich resource for helping individuals and community leaders across the United States to move their programs closer to the realization of more equitable, just, free and prosperous societies.

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